Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

      1.   (currently amended) A portable media player and rating apparatus, comprising:

      a user-manipulable control dedicated for generating a signal indicating a user-supplied rating of a currently played media content in response to a user-supplied rating, the user-supplied rating corresponding to one of a plurality of predefined categories of preferences; and
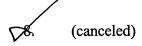
      the portable media player comprising:

      a memory device for storing media contents and a ratings list comprising a list of user supplied ratings associated with the stored media contents, and

      a processor operatively connected to said user-manipulable control and to said memory device for selectively downloading and playing the stored media contents, for receiving the signal from said user-manipulable control, and for associating the user-supplied rating indicated by the signal with the currently played media content, wherein said processor is further operable for ranking the media content in response to the user-supplied ratings in the ratings list and selectively downloading and playing media content in said memory based on the user-supplied ratings in the ratings list, and said user-manipulable control includes input controls for indicating a positive rating and a negative rating, said processor being operative to move the currently playing content toward one of the top and the bottom of the ratings list if the positive rating is indicated and move the currently playing content toward the other one of the top and the bottom of the ratings list if the negative rating is indicated.

      2.   (previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein said processor receives the signal from said user-manipulable control as said processor plays the media content stored in said memory device.

3.   (original) The device of claim 1, wherein the user-manipulable control includes a switch having a plurality of depressible buttons, each of said plurality of depressible buttons corresponding to one of said plurality of predefined categories of preferences.

4.   (original) The device of claim 1, wherein said user-manipulable control includes a multi-position switch movable among different positions, each of said positions corresponding to one of said plurality of predefined categories of preferences.

5.   (previously presented) The device of claim 4, wherein the multi-position switch includes a pivotable lever.

6.   (previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the user-manipulable control is attachable to a portion of a headphone.

7.   (previously presented) The device of claim 6, wherein said portion of a headphone includes a headphone cord.

8.   (canceled)

9.   (currently amended) The device of claim 1, wherein said user-manipulable control further includes input controls for indicating a positive rating, a most positive rating, a neutral rating, a negative rating, and a most negative rating, said processor being operative to move the currently playing content to the top of the ratings list if the most positive rating is indicated, move the currently playing content up by one slot in the ratings list if the positive rating is indicated, move the currently playing content down by one slot in the ratings list if the negative rating is indicated, and move the currently playing content to the bottom of the ratings list if the most negative rating is indicated.

10.   (previously presented) The device of claim 1, wherein said processor is connectable to a server for transmitting the ratings list to a server, whereby the ratings list of user-supplied ratings is comparable with ratings lists of other users.

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11.   (new) The device of claim 1, wherein said processor is further operable for continuously updating a user-supplied rating of the media content based on signals input by the user during subsequent playing of the media content.

12.   (new) The device of claim 10, wherein said processor is operable for receiving recommendations of items from the server based on ratings of the items by other users with similar preferences.